

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-18 and 20 are pending. Claim 19 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 17, and 20 have been amended. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Independent claims 1 and 20 each recite a method for fabricating capacitors for semiconductor devices which include nitriding an upper surface of the lower electrode. Office Action alleges that DeBoer (U.S. Patent No. 5,910,880) teaches this feature and relies on column 4 lines 18-47 of DeBoer (see page 7 of the March 13, 2002 Office Action). Applicants respectfully disagree. DeBoer discloses (in column 4) that a second tantalum comprising layer 40 is formed by exposing an outer surface of a first tantalum comprising layer to a nitrogen comprising ambient. Accordingly, DeBoer does not teach or suggest nitriding an upper surface of the lower electrode and Yang (U.S. Patent No. 5,956,594) does not remedy this deficiency.

In view of the foregoing, the claims are believed to be in form for allowance, and such action is hereby solicited. If any point remains in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, please contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 03-3975 under Order No. 82118/275264. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

Pillsbury Winthrop LLP

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